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John H. McDowell

EXEMPLARY ANCESTORS AND PERNICIOUS SPIRITS

Sibundoy Concepts of Culture Evolution

Hee heeee.
fffffftttt.

Hee heeeee.
ffffftttttt.

Hee heeeee.
fffffffttttt.

With these sounds the distinguished Kamsá elder, taita Bautista Juajibioy, conveys the eerie presence of a menacing spirit. Taita Bautista tells of two ambitious travelers who have left behind the familiar contours of the Sibundoy Valley to wander in search of gold in the spiritual wilderness of its wooded mountainous fringe. First the men hear a distant shout from above; then they feel the breeze pass beside them. Each successive shout emanates from a closer point, and each time the breeze that follows close upon it is stronger. At last the spirit actually becomes visible: the shape of a puma, dressed in white. As the spirit appears, the moon goes behind a cloud and the fire is extinguished. The two men, thrown into a primordial darkness, are left crushed with fright.

Taita Bautista, six times governor of the Kamsá community, is noted for his verbal skills and knowledge of the old days; he animates the story with dramatic effects and we huddle a little closer to the embers of the evening fire. His narrative tactics seem to bring the *mal viento,* the evil wind, right to the margins of the fire's glow, and we all feel perilously vulnerable to the *mala hora,* the evil hour, that point of contact with the spiritual underground.

In Bautista's story the arrival of the spirit is foretold, like all significant events in the Sibundoy Valley, in a dream the previous night. One of the men experiences a warning: "I am going to pass by today, so get out of the way." He alerts

his companion, "A puma or something like that might be coming." The storyteller does not leave this event unexplained; he tells us that the evil wind was a soul, an *ahogado,* or drowned one. In a similar story, Bautista tells us that the souls of purgatory require our prayers and that they become angry at "those who don't know how to pray for them." But this slant toward Roman Catholicism is suspect: a lifelong Catholic, Bautista in his dotage has become tremendously devout. When I visit him a few years later, he will tell no *cuentos pajosos,* foolish stories, and insists on narrating stories from the Bible exclusively.

The Sibundoy Valley of southwestern Colombia is the home of two indigenous communties, the Kamsá (whose language is the sole remnant of the language of the archaic Quillasinga federation) and the Ingano (speakers of the northernmost dialect of Quechua). Spirits appear relentlessly in the narratives of both communities that focus on experiences of the modern-day people. They evince a peculiar obsession with human affairs, and their influence is invariably baneful. These intrusive spirits may take many forms: a black shadow; a moving, shapeless bulk *(bulto);* an irascible elder whose feet do not touch the ground and who offers a cold hand and a colder warning: "Be careful, Nephew!"; a group of floating lights that carry a person across a field.

Recountings and dramatizations of personal encounters with spirit presences have a pervasive nightmarish quality. My compadre Francisco Tandioy, an Ingano who has become a professor of English and Inga at the Universidad de Nariño in Pasto, recalls vividly an experience from his childhood:[1]

> Yo salía por alredador de las siete de la noche,
> por ahí mas,
> y entonces en una parte que fue bien difícil,
> hay un derrumbe grande,
> y casi poco salí a paros.
> Pues me quedé en el pueblo, bien tarde, y solo que iba.
> Y yo me acuerdo que me acordaba de lo que me había dicho mi mama.
> Y cuando en eso oí un ruido pero tremendo,
> parecía que venía un buey grandísimo,
> y entonces corrí y cuando corrí no pude correr.
> Y luego a la vuelta me encontré pues,
> vino un minacuro y eso se volvió en un perro,
> se volvió blanco el perro y no me dejaba pasar.
> Y eso todavía me asustó mas.
> Y entonces llegué a la casa,
> y pero al día siguiente había amanecido con fiebre.
> Amanecí como enfermo.
> Estaba malo, tenían que ir a traer un médico.
> Me dijeron que me había dado mal viento.
>
> [I left around seven in the evening, maybe a bit later, and then in a bad spot where there was a landslide, I almost turned back. I stayed in town very late, and I was alone. And I remember that I thought about what my mother had told me. And just then I heard a loud noise, it sounded like a large ox was coming. Then I began to run and when I tried to run I couldn't do it. And then after that I ran into, well, a firefly came along and then it turned into a dog; the dog turned white and it wouldn't let me pass. And that scared me even more. And so I arrived at my house, but the next day I awoke with fever. I woke up very sick. I was in bad shape, they had to go and bring a native doctor. They told me that I had received a bad wind (spirit sickness).]

The framing is important here: the protagonist is passing by a bad spot, *mal punto.* These are places marked by topographical contrast and are often sites of previous human tragedies. Moreover, we are told that it is seven in the evening, dusk, a period of transition into nighttime when spirits are likely to be abroad. Francisco's story conveys the terrifying self-transformative powers of these spirit presences, whose mutability denies the stability of material substance. A story by Justo Jacanamijoy, my adopted Kamsá father, reinforces this feature: he is out on a path at night and senses a dark form, about the size of a dog, brush past him; it returns going the other way, this time the size of a cow. The child Francisco awakens from his experience with a fever and his parents are obliged to send for a native doctor. The family's diagnosis is unequivocal: mal viento, or spirit sickness, has struck their youngster.

The spirits do not physically assault so much as disorient those who chance upon them; their mere proximity triggers a psychic disintegration that can be fatal, and routinely causes severe illness. Sibundoy Indians refer to this malady as spirit sickness, and they believe that only Catholic prayer and the spiritual ministry of the native doctors can stop the advance of its symptoms, which include loss of appetite and color, severe vomiting and diarrhea, fever, rash, coughing, and chills.

What are we to make of these curious accounts? I do not intend here to offer an externally based rationale bringing in, for example, psychological or sociological models, though these options might produce useful results. Instead I propose to work largely within the context of Sibundoy thought itself. My treatment of Sibundoy spiritual beliefs and practices will be lamentably brief in this paper; I refer the reader to two works for additional detail (McDowell 1989 and in press).

Let's begin by asking: how do Sibundoy natives understand these transcendental experiences? What kinds of native testimony might be available for scrutiny?

In the first place, Sibundoy natives routinely discuss the spirit realm, which constitutes, after all, a crucial influence on their well-being. Statements such as this are common:

> Nosotros consideramos que todas partes están llenos de espíritus.
> Esos espíritus a ciertas horas no están con buen humor,
> se podría decir.
> Y entonces cuando no están de buen humor atacan al hombre.
> Entonces se puede hablar por ejemplo del mal humor del cemeterio,
> de los ríos, o quebradas,
> de las rocas,

se puede hablar del mal viento de las montes.
Entonces está llena de espíritus a veces hasta las mísmas casas.

[We believe that all places are full of spirits. These spirits, at certain hours, are not congenial, one might say. And so when they are not in a good humor, they attack people. One can speak for example of the evil wind of the cemetery, of the rivers and streams, of the cliffs; one can speak of the evil wind of the forest. So the world is full of spirits, sometimes even in our houses.]

This discourse identifies an overall domain, a spirit realm labeled *binyea* in Kamsá and *huayra* in Inga, each term meaning literally "wind" but connoting the vast domain of spiritual forces. The spirit realm, we soon discover, is composed of two kinds of spirits, the spirits of the forest ("who never were human") and the souls of the departed. Spirits are said to flourish at certain places and times; we have already happened upon the indigenous concepts of the bad hour, the bad spot. But native exegesis is pragmatic in nature, geared to the successful manipulation of this realm. The native doctors recognize specific categories of forest spirits (for example, the masters of different animal species and natural domains), but their discourse, too, reflects the practical goal of providing spiritual remedies.

In coming to a fuller appreciation of this spiritual system that so colors life in the Sibundoy Valley, we will find it useful to draw upon what I would term a Sibundoy theory of the origin and evolution of civilization, expounded most clearly in another branch of Sibundoy narrative, the mythic narrative, but also manifest in the folk medicinal system aimed at securing precious spiritual health.

KAKA TEMPO

The same Bautista, on one of my early visits to the valley, provided me with an overview of the succession of cosmic epochs in Sibundoy thought.

cuentan, ¿no?
tiempo de la oscuridad, yibets tempoka
y ya tiempo de luzna, binyen tempoka
y ya otra, kaka tempoka, tiempo crudo,
    comían todo crudo, kaka tempo
        (laughs)
todo tiempo crudo que comían crudo pues todo.
Toda fruta, todo crudo, crudo, crudo,
    como antes no había candela.
Por eso se llama kaka tempo, tiempo crudo.
Despues ya que hubo candela,
    entonces ya aprendían a cocinar.
Antes que sabía gustar, como habían muchos
habían estado conversando los mayores
uno estaba allí oyendo todo
    Antes de la llegada de los misioneros

[They tell it, see?
The time of darkness, the dark time.
And later the time of light, the dawn time.
And later another, the raw time, the time of rawness,
    they ate everything raw, the raw time.
        (laughs)
All the raw time they ate everything raw.
Every fruit, everything raw, raw, raw,
    since before there was no fire.
That's why it is called the raw period, the time of rawness.
Later when there was fire,
    then at last they learned how to cook.
Earlier I used to like it, since there were many,
the elders had been conversing
one was there hearing everything.
    Before the arrival of the missionaries.]

This account identifies a series of cosmic moments: a primordial, inaccessible time of darkness which yields to the time of light with the first rising of the sun (the Kamsá word *binyea* means "dawn" as well as "wind" and "spirit"); the ensuing raw time, which is treated with some amusement; and its sequel, the time of fire. Lastly, we can deduce a time of the missionaries, by which he means the Capuchin Order that became established in the valley just after the turn of the century (Bonilla 1972).

Bautista's account is skeletal; he produces it for my sake from his reminiscences as a child auditor. But during a year's residence in the Sibundoy Valley, I was privileged to become an auditor in my own right, and I heard numerous performances from a narrative tradition that is carefully segregated in Sibundoy thought, which is labeled *antioj palabra* in Inga, *antewa parlo* in Kamsá. The defining feature of this narrative category is its focus on the times and doings of the ancestors—in Inga, *nujpamandacuna*, the first people. Sibundoy ancestors are not reckoned in family or clan lines; they are not conceived of as specific progenitors of modern social groupings. Instead they are a hypothetical early stratum of humanity, specifically the stratum that "made the world safe for civilization."

The ancestral period begins when the very first people appear in the time of light, and it recedes only with the establishment of appropriate social forms in the time of fire. The body of mythic narrative depicts the gradual transition from a primordial epoch when the celestial deities interact directly with the first people and the earth is dominated by a substrate population known as *aucas* in Inga and *yembas* in Kamsá (terms that could be translated as "heathen savages"), to the modern period with its familiar patterns of human civilization.

Much of this narrative centers on the pivotal movement from the raw time to the time of fire, a formative period when the exemplary deeds of the ancestors established precedents for behavior that remain in force to the present moment (fig. 1).

Sibundoy mythic narrative is heard when people assemble in the evenings with gourds of *chicha* in their hands. Its episodes flesh out taita Bautista's skeletal inventory of world-forming epochs. We hear, in alternating strains of reverence and hilarity, how the weasel danced before Wangetsmuna to obtain fire; how the mouse procured corn seed for planting; how death and hardship entered the world; and, at the most recent extension of mythic time, how taita Tamoabioy left his lands in perpetuity to his descendents, the indigenous peoples of the valley.

In this imposing corpus there is one myth, actually a series of episodes clustered around the culture hero Wangetsmuna, that conveys the full trajectory of the civilizing process in the Sibundoy Valley. Wangetsmuna is now an obscure figure; like Viracocha in the central and southern Andes, he appears both as culture hero and deity. Even remembrance of his name is fading in the Sibundoy Valley; his people are forgetting him. But the elders recall his deeds, and narrative bits continue to cling to this shrouded figure.

I have recorded four tellings of the full cycle, another telling of the Death of

Figure 1. Francisco Narvaez spins a tale of the ancestors.

Wangetsmuna (which assimilates the Christian model of martyrdom), and a multitude of narrative fragments depicting isolated moments in the overall cycle. The name *Wangetsmuna* is Kamsá; it has no precise meaning to modern-day Kamsá people, but incorporates a root similar to the word for "beak." We can speculate that Wangetsmuna was once a birdlike deity, perhaps the master of the feathered protagonists populating Sibundoy mythic narrative. In order to sample the world of the ancestors, allow me to walk you through some key moments in the Wangetsmuna cycle, drawing on excerpts from tellings by two outstanding Kamsá storytellers, Mariano Chicunque and Estanislao Chicunque.

The story begins with the original human beings: a miner, his younger brother who cooks for him, and in some variants, their sister who spins thread. The miner encounters a trail and leaves a trap there; he dreams that night of a young woman caught in the trap, and sure enough, the next day he finds her there entangled in its vines. She scolds him; he lets her go; then they decide to marry. The identity of this woman, and of her father, is made very clear:

> Entonces esa niña le había llevado allá a la casa,
> y entonces que era,
> dicen así pues, el sol, entonces, ¿cómo decirlo?
> "bngabe taitá" quiere decir como "nuestro señor," como "el papá,"
> pues es decir "el papá."
> Es que dijo;
> "Mi papá es el sol, taitana, yo soy hija."
> Esa es la luna que había sido, esa es la luna.
>
> [And so that woman took him to her house,
> and then it was,
> they tell it like this, the sun, now, how to say it?
> "bngabe taitá" is like saying "Our Father," like "the Father,"
> so it's like saying "the Father."
> So she said:
> "My father is the sun, taitana, I am his daughter."
> That is the moon, it turned out, that is the moon.]

The initial phase of the Wangetsmuna cycle transports us to an early moment in cosmic time, a moment when the celestial deities interacted directly with the very first ancestors of the modern people.

They agree to marry, and the miner follows her home only to experience the uncomfortable proximity of her solar father:

> ibojaushjangoka
> a la warda rato tsetebemana orna chorna ndeolpe nyetxá mari sebiaka
> more ch karusunga betsaibaika inabayushubwenana marioy
> u ch i mari impase inabojojwiñe
> eso si ch chinyanena ana chakirmesha
> kemsoye chakirmeshe chakirmeshe inetsominē ch chinyañe
> bweno

chore ibojtseitmey ch shembasana ch boyá jabokná
ch jobwamayama trata yojtsemena
ibojtseitume mallajkta btse mateba inajajonaye
i ch i shoye ibojtsetebema jopodiak
i chorna twambabe tjamenka inatebonsantsana choy
shinyebe tjamena chká inatebonsantsana choyna
choy yojtseitumena nyetxá
choy yojtsetemena orna la warda shinye yojtashjango
jasama yojtachnungun shkwanana
ch i choy nyetxá ibojtsentxeninana
ch i xuboye santo dios nyetxá ibojtsentxeninana
a chora jasana saná cada xnena arobaka
cada saná arobaka ana unga arobaka jaftsesanaka
unga arobe yojaftsesaye i a unga aroba yojasaye
i chor chora yojayana ndayeka ndayeka
ntxamo mwentxe ndayeka ibojatangtxana barbachanaka ndayekaka
chora ch bembe ibojojwaka
atxe tijebana ch tjoye babarchnina binyenoye nina tijokiñe
chká ibojtsangetxana kwedadoka
a choye jtsatsukama ndoñika
ajá chorkokaye yojtisotebema i ch máquina ch yojtetenana
i chora marina mari ko nye impase ibojojwiñe
i chká yojtenatjumbañe ch marie impase
i shinye ndmwá lware ora ch bejayiña yojtatenabngo i impas
chkaka ajá

[They arrived there together.
Heaven forbid, when they sat down for a while, suddenly, there by a large body of water,
like these trucks nowadays, he came, he came roaring to that water.
And that body of water dried up completely.
Yes indeed, that beach was pure beads,
these things, that beach was made of beads, these beads.
Fine.
Then they went to hide, that young woman and her husband-to-be,
they had agreed to marry,
They hid, a very large jar was kept there,
and inside there they were able to sit down.
And then hen droppings were scattered about there,
the sun's droppings like that were scattered all about there.
There they completely hid themselves.
As they were hiding there, heaven forbid, the sun arrived.
He stopped to eat as he went on his rounds.
And there it was getting very hot for those two,
inside there saintly god it was getting very hot for those two.
And then when it came to eating, each serving an arobe,
each serving an arobe, so three arobes he would eat.
Three arobes he came to eat, three arobes he ate.
And then, then he spoke: "Why, why,
what, here, why does it smell so much of moss, why?"

Then that daughter responded:
"I went to the woods where there was moss, I went to gather firewood."
Like that they were giving off an odor, watch out!
He came there to take the lid off, but no,
aha, right then he sat down and that machine roared.
And then that water, that water completely dried up,
and like that the water completely disappeared.
And when the sun took off to another place, the river completely came together again.
That's how it was, aha.]

In one of the most remarkable passages in Sibundoy mythology, the awesome sun deity is portrayed as the driver of an immense machine and as the consumer of enormous quantities of food to fuel his journey across the sky. Sibundoy exegesis of these episodes makes clear their exemplary character: the sun's droppings account for the presence of gold in the world, and the sands that are beads reveal the origin of the colorful seed *chaquira*, which are worn with pride by members of the indigenous communities.

But returning to the plot: if the sun is portrayed as hostile to humankind, too pervasive in his fiery persona to be endured, his daughter, the moon, is far more accommodating. In human form she agrees to marry the miner, and she proposes the following arrangement:

chorna chorna ch shema ibojoyana boyan bndata jobwamayamasna
asna bojajna metsekaka yibeta atxe chtashjango
yojaka tongentsesh yojenobojajo
shemna ibojantregaka
i ch anteona ch karilyesha ch karielo o ch karilyesha
i ch mora mundetsabobwatemiñe morala
kachká chkatema inatxebwana choye yojtsabotswamina bojajnaka
bweno
i sertoka yojtsojajwa kanyentxe ch wabochena

[Then, then that woman spoke to the young man so they could marry:
"Now take this wad of cotton, in the evening I will come to you."
She took the cotton, she rubbed it on herself.
The woman gave it to him.
And in the old days they had that sack, that bag, or that sack,
what we nowadays know as a pack,
like that he slung it over his shoulder, he had it stuffed with cotton.
Fine.
And truly she remained there inside with the older brother.]

Cotton, portrayed here as the medium of spiritual communication, plays an important spiritual role in the practice of the native doctors as an agent for retaining spiritual essence. In the mythical context, this unusual mode of association triggers a seminal episode in the myth, the transformation of the younger brother into the infant Wangetsmuna. The younger brother hears the

sound of people conversing during the night and goes about inspecting the older brother's gear to discover the secret:

i chorna cha yojatobatsaye ch tanentxe
yojatontxá bonyanana bonyanana
i ch espiritualkwentana nye ndoñe ibojinyen
a cha ch ch bjayokna yojobwambaye
ch shema ibojtsebwache ch bjayoka
akabe wabentsana xondengwa casi xtajtsinyena
i chorna yojayana ar kochjebebokna ar ntxamo chakomojama

[And then he laid out that bedding.
He began to look through it, to look through it.
And he just didn't find that spiritlike presence.
And there at the mine she told him,
that woman came to visit him at the mine:
"Your younger brother was looking for me, he almost found me."
And then he said: "So, you will appear to him, then what will become of him?"]

The next day the younger brother finds the cotton, which he rubs all about his body, including the crotch area. This action has the effect of turning him into a woman. In an attempt to return him to his original gender, the older brother has him (her) lie down beside a river and allow all the animals to approach, each one taking a lick at the vagina. The younger brother is to remain silent. All goes well until the last beast comes by, identified as one with very sharp claws—very likely the small bear that used to be found in the vicinity of the Sibundoy Valley. The younger brother cries out in pain and throws this beast off of him. Now all the beasts must return, this time not to take a lick but to take a bite. The narrator makes this agony iconic: the beasts come "taking a bite, taking a bite, taking a bite, taking a bite."

Eventually, all that remains of the younger brother is a head, which becomes vexatious to the miner in the manner of the "rolling head" that appears in a number of American Indian mythologies (Lévi-Strauss 1978; Niles 1981), reminding us that important clusters in our small-scale settings have a pan-Andean or even pan-Amerindian presence. The head proposes a solution: the older brother must take the wooden drum from the wall, place the head inside, tie the cover of the drum back on, and throw it into the river. The drum, with the head inside, disappears downstream.

Far below, the heathen women are out washing clothes. One of them spots the drum and takes it out of the water. She opens it and finds a tender infant, the young Wangetsmuna, inside. The celestial bodies, the sun and the moon, play no further role in this myth; we have entered a subsequent cosmogenic phase, the dawn of the present creation, which is marked by the emergence of Wangetsmuna. The tender infant grows rapidly and becomes a pivotal force in this native American account of the movement from savagery to civilization.

The heathens lack specific faculties essential to civil society in the modern creation: they have fire, but they are without the anus, and therefore cannot eat

food; and they exhibit a very odd form of sexuality, involving the mustering of a collective penis. These shortcomings are described in one telling of the myth:

Eating habits

i ch asna ch lware ch imba shemanga ina shemanga
ase chngana ndasatebjunga tonday satabjuxe ndbomnunga del todo
ntxamo jasan ndoñe imundobena
i jenana chumbunga nyetxá imenaftsejena
jashbwana chumbo botamana jashbutsana i jwexniyana
i chunga jasanema mntxena ana nye ch vapor ch tajwetsa jutsebmwanayana
nye chká chngana bida imnabomen

[And he then in that place the heathen women, only women,
then they had no anus, they were completely without the asshole.
How to eat, they weren't able to.
And they had turkeys, they had lots of them.
They would kill a fine turkey, pluck it and place it in the pan.
And to eat the meat they would just gulp the vapor, the steam.
And just like that they found nourishment.]

Sexuality

i ch ntsekotema ch bosheko imenaboremediana
chorna boyá imbangana shemangana imnakjanaye
i chká serse baká joyebontxayka jensemillama

[And that long and short thing, that penis they had there.
Then the heathen husband, the women were lying there,
and like that truly, to speak in vulgar terms, they would engender.]

It is possible that the inappropriate customs described in these passages encode an ethnocentric highland perception of certain lowland customs, such as the maintenance of separate men's and women's quarters. In any case, Wangetsmuna sets about correcting this state of affairs. In the place where the anus should be, the heathens have a mark. They see Wangetsmuna enjoying the pleasure of eating, and beg him to open their anuses so that they might eat also:

asa chore ch mamanga imojuyan karay
i asna bnga chkana satebjuñe tonday siñalanana inetsoseñalanika
chorna a vera mas que chayobana xmatabjoka
i chká yojovalentia chjovalentiakaye
i ch señalanentxena kochilloka jisatobjwanaye
i shnana nday shnana betiyish jatungentsana jtsanatwanaye
iye serta nyengna ndoká i txabá yojtatekja
chnga imojontxa ch sayana txabá imojtsetjanmiyanse serta
ajá imojtsobanaka

[Then after a while those mothers were saying: "Damn."
And they they had no asshole, only a mark, they were marked.
Then: "Please, even if it kills me, make me a hole there."

And so they made up their minds, they decided on it.
And on that mark, with a knife he opened them.
And a medicine, which medicine? he chewed some bark and rubbed it on them.
And truly some of them had no trouble and healed well.
They began to eat well, truly they could shit.
Aha, others died.]

Wangetsmuna plays the part of the first native doctor and introduces proper eating habits among the heathens.

His attempt to correct the peculiar sexual practices of the heathens meets with less success. He sets a trap along the path where the collective penis travels to cross the river to copulate with the heathen women. This organ is crushed as it activates the trap; the earth shakes and a loud groan is heard. The storytellers are quite graphic on what they clearly perceive to be a sexual perversity: two heathen men walking along carrying their damaged organ coiled around a long pole.

Wangetsmuna is advised to run to the house of his grandfather, who turns out to be the thunder. And so another celestial deity enters the story. The thunder, a major figure in Andean cosmologies (Cobo 1956; Rowe 1946; Demarest 1981), is portrayed in this myth cycle much as he appears in classical Andean sources: a powerful deity given to spinning a sling about and sending off destructive peals of thunder and bolts of lightning.

At this juncture in the story he appears as a protective grandfather who agrees to hide his grandson and then obliterates the heathen men when they insist on searching for the one who abused them:

shinyaka yojtsatjajo tsinjnujaka
tempo mntxá yojabwertataye ch beka iyojatekunyaye
i tempo yojajwesika
armas motsemolestañika yojtsejwesa uta
pobre imbanga yojtsapochoka
wajosaya ibojobouweyana impas

[By the fire he picked up a sling.
Right away like that he swung it about, he really let it fly.
And right away it thundered:
"Yes, keep on making trouble." He thundered a second time.
The poor heathens were completely finished off.
The thunder surely defended him.]

With this episode a mythical network is completed: the miner, who searches for gold (the sun's droppings), provides the balls of gold for the thunder deity's sling. Wangetsmuna enters the scene as a catalyst, and his caprice results in both the eradication of the heathens and the preparation of the world for the establishment of modern human society.

The narrative shifts gears here, and Wangetsmuna is sent off (much like his

counterpart from the southern Andes, Viracocha) to visit the world and to report back to his grandfather after a year's time. Wangetsmuna goes about "pronouncing judgments," giving the animals their voices and characteristics, and eventually establishing for all time the boundary between animals and humans:

chora ch btse taitana ibojamanda kema trompetubjwa
kbantxabwache nyets lware kochjapasia
kochantsabaina wangetsmunaka
chká bayinga kochjiyatena kochjiyenoyebaye
i mntxasa kmochjibobinynaka bayunga
kochjoprontaye chká kochjayajemaka
mamaxna mntxaka kochanjebiajwa wangetsmunaka
iyendona mntxaka mntxá chanjebiajwaka monona
mntxaka osungatxiyeka chkurobjwa nyetxaka chubjna ko che twamba ashbwanaka
iye ch wasasha jetsasubjusasanika
chuja chorna ibojayabojwaka
mamaxna kachkaka ana jashbwana ch twamba
ibojatsyabojwa choka yojabokna dañino ch osungutxiye
kach maldison txetaná
monona ndoñe ana ch shekenajeñe biajuñe joftsubtxiyana
jotajsbinyianana chká jotajseit'unjanana
ntxamo jiyebinyentena trompetubjwana jiwajatut'anaka jiyana
ndaite kejutsemntena iye bnga naturala m'lware diosa
ibojuftsabashejwankana bnga naturala yentxanga
bayingena yojaisakedá chentxena ya

[Then the grandfather sent him into the world with a trumpet:
"You will visit the world, to all places you will travel.
You will be called Wangetsmuna.
Like this you will go among the beasts, you will defend yourself with an incantation.
And like that you will survive among the beasts.
Prepare yourself, like this you must travel.
The weasel like this you must make her laugh, Wangetsmuna,
the squirrel like this, like this you will make the monkey laugh,
Like that the weasel, the weasel surely, that one kills the hen there,
and that rump is eaten first.
That one then squealed.
The weasel like that she kills the hen,
she squealed at her, there she turned out harmful, that weasel.
You must lay a curse on her.
The monkey, no, he must hang on that rope, on that vine,
he must fly, like that he must fly."
At the next dawn he had to sound the trumpet.
Whatever day it was, we humans in God's world,
we humans became people for all time,
The animals remained animal from that time on.]

In his travels Wangetsmuna sustains a series of rather biblical encounters with people in different places. In some tellings the Wangetsmuna cycle concludes with the culture hero returning to abide with his grandfather; in others, perhaps influenced by the Christian story, the unfortunate hero falls victim to ravenous beasts here on earth. We can see that the sequence of episodes included in this mythic narrative cycle spans a crucial moment in cosmic time: the transition from the preancestral period, when the proto-people interacted directly with the celestial bodies, to the dawn of the ancestral world, when the first people began to live in society according to "civilized" norms.

The mythic narratives featuring Wangetsmuna make up the primary foundation myth of the Sibundoy natives, depicting the vanquishing of the heathens, whose inappropriate modes of living had to yield to civilized customs; the establishment of the boundary between people and animals; and the origin of many practices, objects, and habits constitutive of the modern-day social and natural worlds. They carry us from a remote "time before time" to a tangible prehistory composed of familiar patterns of behavior.

THE ANCESTRAL PRESENCE

I hope that this brief excursion into Sibundoy mythic narrative convincingly suggests its role in formulating the civilizing process in one Andean setting. There is a temporal and a spatial dispensation to this gradual taming of brute spiritual power. Along the time scale, early encounters with spiritual elements produce knowledge, wisdom, power, and order; later encounters, especially as we approach modern times, produce the disintegrative effects of spirit sickness. The first people have the mettle to withstand such encounters and profit from them; contemporary mortals are less resilient. In the ancestral period, spirituality lies at the heart of world action; later it is banished to the byways.

The myths trace a three-tiered spiritual topography: the Sibundoy Valley at the center, a vibrant point of tension between order and chaos; the highland wastes above it (the *paramo*), a bleak region of destructive spiritual influences; and the lowland jungle below, a region of potent spirituality. Following the trajectory of Wangetsmuna, Sibundoy native doctors travel to the lowlands to learn from renowned jungle shamans.

The Sibundoy corpus of mythic narrative presents a charter not so much for social structure (as in Malinowski's formulation of this concept) as for the pursuit of individual and collective health and happiness in the modern period. The ancestral model represents the best hope for survival in a precarious existence. It is lauded in Kamsá ceremonial speeches, which routinely proclaim loyalty to the ancestors through this formula (see McDowell 1983):

> ts-ye-ts-a-shekwastona
>
> [I am following in the footsteps of the ancestors.]

The ancestors are not as remote as one might think; in fact, they persist in an

eternal present that lies just outside the margins of normal, wakeful experience. Sibundoy natives use a variety of channels to recover access to the ancestors and to enlist their aid in combating the onslaught of deleterious spiritual forces.

Fragments of ancestral wisdom are preserved in the sayings of the ancestors, Inga *nujpamandacuna imasa rimascacuna,* "how the first people used to speak," brief statements linking perceived signs to spiritual consequences. Images occurring in dreams as well as wakeful observations trigger an association between sign and consequence whose validity is attributed to the authority of the ancestors. These sayings encompass the entire fabric of life in the Sibundoy setting, yet they tend to concentrate on spiritual health. The sayings are part of a folk medicinal system that seeks to avoid spiritual sickness; they allow for self-diagnosis of impending vulnerability to malevolent spiritual forces. (fig. 2).

For Sibundoy natives, dreams are a precious channel of communication linking the individual to the ancestors. Dreaming is not a casual experience, nor is it something that arises in the psychodynamics of the self. Instead, as the Ingas say (using the causative suffix *-chi*), we *are made* to dream: dreams come from the source external to the individual, the spiritual underground, and the

Figure 2. Kamsá native doctor with curing branches and spirit medium in hand.

ancestors have left a code, carefully passed along from one generation to the next, that elucidates their meaning.

Another channel allows not for a recovery of ancestral wisdom but for communion with ancestral spirits: the visionary drug experience managed by the native doctors of the valley. Two hallucinogenic substances, *yagé* (*Banisteriopsis caapi* and related species) and *borrachero (Brugmansia),* are prepared and administered for medicinal purposes. Yagé is more frequently used; every Sibundoy takes a dose at least once a year as a kind of spiritual tonic, and special curing ceremonies occur in case of spiritual sickness or accidental injury, as well as in association with planting and other routine activities. Borrachero is a stronger psychodyslepic agent, and its use is confined largely to cases of heinous sorcery.

It is believed that these visionary experiences transport patient and doctor to the ancestral domain, where they benefit from the direct intervention of ancestral spirits in their predicaments. The native doctors call on spirit helpers and seek to banish negative spiritual influences. Here the ancestral impact is not mediated through a traditional code; rather, the modern people come face-to-face with the ancestors and assimilate some small portion of their spiritual prowess.

There is one additional recourse to the ancestors: during the Sibundoy carnival people gather to dance, make music, and consume large quantities of chicha, the home-brewed corn beer. Dressed in their feathered *coronas,* or crowns, the modern-day people impersonate ancestors and heathens in a striking enactment of cosmology (McDowell 1987). As each musician-dancer moves within a vibrant envelope of sound, the ancestors appear to walk the earth once again, and the modern people renew their contract with the ancestral model (fig. 3).

What I have done in this presentation is to bring together two prominent forms of Sibundoy discourse, personal experience narratives about encounters with rampant spirits and mythic narratives about the times of the ancestors, in an effort to portray Andean cosmology in one microcosm. These two narrative modes contrast on many counts: the stories are told in casual, often intimate settings by people of all ages, whereas the myths are performed in more formal gatherings by elders; the stories well forth from the actual experience of the speaker, whereas the myths transport us to ancestral times.

In spite of these contrasts, the two narrative traditions form interlocking segments of one comprehensive story, and they constantly reference and revive one another. The pernicious spirits of the modern frame emerge from the fabulous cosmological scaffolding constructed and reconstructed in the myths; this cosmology in turn is validated and renewed with each new account of a spirit encounter.

Pernicious spirits as well as exemplary ancestors remain a critical influence in the lives of modern Sibundoy Indians. Once this spiritual tapestry is revealed, it becomes clear that the Sibundoy experience is largely conditioned by this vast panorama of cosmic struggle, which so often intrudes upon the human sphere

Figure 3. *Aucas* and ancestors come out on carnival day.

of action. What the uneducated eye might perceive as a mere crest in a hill the initiated mind knows to be a mal punto, a spiritually charged interstice; the odd behavior of a bird or a striking image in a dream provides evidence of significant spiritual dynamics. And people are constantly on the lookout for pugnacious souls of the departed or unworldly forest spirits.

Juxtaposing personal experience stories about modern-day encounters with spirits and mythic narratives about the doings of the ancestors allows us to grasp the underlying dynamic animating the Sibundoy concept of world history: a perpetual quest for control over unruly spiritual forces, which is played out both in the collective effort to achieve civilization and in the daily striving for spiritual health. Each phase in the cosmic succession brings a new extension of spiritual control: darkness is replaced by light; rawness is replaced by cooking; the heathens are vanquished by the first people; and proper norms of subsistence and sexual reproduction replace the previous models. The advent of the missionaries is easily assimilated into this grand scheme of things: their blessing is but another instrument for warding off the disintegrative influences of unrestrained spiritual vitality, which constantly threatens to overwhelm the fragile conventions that preserve a realm for human development.

In closing, I should like to frame the Sibundoy case as an important voice

from the periphery, which proposes its own particular version of Andean civilization. The Sibundoy data contain many apparent realizations of Andean prototypes: the *aucas,* for instance, are a pan-Andean substrate mentioned in numerous colonial and contemporary accounts; the Sibundoy Wangetsmuna is probably cognate with Viracocha of the central and southern Andes; and the Sibundoy thunder deity with his whirling sling could be straight out of Bernabé Cobo. Other elements in the Sibundoy cosmology, such as the reverence for the first people and the cultivation of an ecstatic and visionary shamanism, are less familiar to those steeped in the literature on Tawantinsuyo and Cuzco of the contact period.

And so the question arises: how typical of the Andes is this cosmology founded on the interplay of exemplary ancestors and pernicious spirits? If we take the classical model of Andean society, based on ethnohistorical records from the central and southern Andes, as the watermark, the Sibundoy case emerges as a radical periphery, a remote reflex of the civilizing process emanating outward from this southern core of Nuclear America (Steward 1974). But let's examine this argument. The Tawantinsuyo–Cuzco nexus enjoys a privileged status in Andean studies, due in part to the early and persistent high civilizations that flourished there and in part to the comparatively abundant ethnohistorical and ethnographic records available for this axis. As rich and fascinating as this literature may be, we can still inquire whether this region should have a peremptory claim to "Andeanness."

It is true that the Incas carried their civilization along an extended swath of the Andes. Yet the Incan civilization was built upon a continuous trajectory of cultural development, and in some ways—for example, in the elevation of the sun deity above all others, which Demarest (1981) sees as an adjunct of the colonizing process—effected an idiosyncratic transmutation of the Andean cosmological foundation. The Inca empire is doubtless an important crystallization of persistent Andean cosmological themes, but perhaps the time has come to reevaluate its claim to define the "essence" of "Andeanness."

How might the Sibundoy materials facilitate this process of reconstruction? The Sibundoy mythos coincides nicely with Demarest's notion of "the generalized celestial creator god" as "a widespread and ancient pattern" (1981:46). Perhaps we can develop an appreciation for the innovative character of the Incaic experiment. Demarest continues: "In contrast to Inti and the solar emphasis of the Inca, the generalized creator/culture hero/sky god was more important to the nonelite population and more widespread." This line of reasoning suggests that vibrant peripheries such as the Sibundoy Valley, areas that never came under the influence of Incaic empire-building, hold their own clues to the enigmatic quality of "Andeanness."

We can see the Sibundoy Valley as one microcosm among a multitude of Andean microcosms, each containing common Andean elements as well as particularizing features. To select one salient ingredient, it should by now be clear that the societies of the Sibundoy Valley display a close affinity with lowland civilizations; to this day the lowland neighbors are known in Inga and

in Kamsá as *amigos,* and important forms of material and spiritual exchange bind them together (Taussig 1987). But a significant tie to the lowlands hardly negates their claim to "Andeanness." As Wendell Bennett (1946:58) remarked, "In the Northern Andes, the cultural links with the Tropical Forest cultures are particularly marked. . . . In spite of the cultural exchange, however, one cannot speak of a typical Amazonian culture in the Highlands nor of an Andean culture in the Lowlands." Moreover, a pattern of intimate interaction between highland and lowland peoples is normal in most latitudes along the Andes, as a number of recent studies confirm (Flores-Ochoa 1979; Urton 1981; Bastien 1978). The Sibundoy case, then, stresses the importance of factoring the Amazonian connection into the Andean equation.

Perhaps the underlying message of the Sibundoy arena and others like it is that the Andes is far more than the Tawantinsuyo–Cuzco nexus: it is the southern highlands stretching off into northern Argentina and Chile; it is the northern highlands reaching the shores of the Caribbean in Colombia and Venezuela. Likewise, we might conclude that Andean civilization cannot be understood without reference to the adjacent *sierra* and *montaña,* the transitional zones leading from the cool highlands to the coastal and jungle margins.

It is my hope that the evidence from places like the Sibundoy Valley will contribute to a reconstruction of the very concept of "Andeanness." Sibundoy, just beyond the northern fringe of Incan expansion, provides a point of transition to the various Chibchan states lying to the north. Simultaneously, as the easternmost intermountain valley at its latitude, it serves as a point of communication between the highlands and the lowlands. The Sibundoy peoples never came under the political control of the Incas, though they have experienced a process of Spanish colonization and Catholic proselytizing that has been the common destiny of all Andean natives. These considerations, in concert, define the specific purchase of the Sibundoy Valley on the elusive quality of "Andeanness."

In the final analysis, it is probably safe to conclude that the exemplary ancestors and pernicious spirits that populate the Sibundoy worldview and world have their counterparts throughout the Andes, ultimately deriving from some sort of Andean cosmological bedrock. Even so, it is undeniable that they exude their own particular aura, just as the chicha of the Sibundoy Valley has its own inimitable taste.

NOTES

1. I have attempted to preserve some feeling of the original phrasing of the oral performances. All transcripts from recorded speech are couched in verse lines reflecting utterance boundaries. Translations from Spanish conversation are provided below the original texts in paragraph form; translations from mythic narrative performances in Spanish and Kamsá appear below the original texts in linear form.

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INSIDE/OUTSIDE, WHICH SIDE COUNTS?

Duality-of-Self and Bipartization in Quechua

Whenever two great cultural traditions come into contact, processes are set in motion that can lead to the emergence of a new cultural tradition which is neither completely one nor the other, but a combination of both. In addition to this combination, certain aspects of both original cultures may also continue to shape the emerging culture. When anthropologists, linguists, and other social scientists begin to study the new culture resulting from the contact, it is often difficult to know precisely which cultural features are the continuations of precontact traditions and which are the results of synergy. The determination of whether a given cultural feature has persisted from pre-Conquest times or emerged in the post-Conquest period is often complicated by its relative degree of transparency or opacity in the contemporary culture. Thus in order to interpret the modern culture, the researcher must take advantage of and incorporate into the investigation the information, knowledge, and research paradigms available from a variety of disciplines.[1]

In the Andean region today the analyses of cultural phenomena increasingly are enriched by the incorporation of the various methodological approaches of anthropology, ethnohistory, and archaeology.[2] To this list I would add linguistics. Given the primacy of language in human social behavior, it seems only prudent to pay more attention to language, which can shed light on many aspects of Andean society and culture.

Many early Andean "linguistic" writings, such as grammars, dictionaries, and catechisms, were designed to facilitate the Christianization and Castilianization of the indigenous population (Holguín 1952 [1608]; Nieto Polo 1964 [1753]; Santo Tomás 1951 [1563]; and others). Dictionaries and grammars are still produced (Cerrón-Palomino 1976; Cusihuamán 1976; Various